SYNOPSIS

RURAL SECONDARY SCHOOL EDUCATION AND POVERTY LEVELS IN EAST AND WEST GODAVARI DISTRICTS OF ANDHRA PRADESH – A STUDY

by

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Introduction

Education is an important input both for the growth of the society as well as for the individual. Properly planned educational input can contribute to increase in the national gross products, cultural richness, build positive attitude towards technology, increase efficiency and effectiveness of the governance. Education opens new horizons for an individual, provides new aspirations and develops new values. It strengthens the competencies and develops commitment. Education generates in an individual, a critical outlook on social and political realities and sharpens the ability to self–examination, self–monitoring and self–criticism.

In India, education has an extreme priority among all other human needs and requirements. Therefore, all the states in India have accepted free and compulsory secondary education Acts. However even where such legislation exists penal classes are seldom enforced, because of social & economic reasons, Instead, incentive such as mid day meals, free books and uniform are provided to attract children to school perhaps, the best achievement of the last three decades is the respect of the universal provision of facilities for secondary education.

Secondary school education

The secondary school has been introduced in the village not only to bring in minimum literacy to the rural population, but also as the central institution for the development of villages. Its secondary objective is to teach the basic skills of communication. The high proportion of dropouts and increasing number of

illiterates indicate that even the basic aims of formal schooling are not being achieved. Consequently, there is a growing concern among educators and planners that existing secondary education does not provide a particularly helpful or relevant experience for those who do not progress to higher levels.

Rural Poverty

Poverty has been the major focus of planning in India. After India got independence, the Government of India resolution of March, 1950 stated that planning in India was intended to improve the standard of living of the people of efficient use of the resources and providing employment opportunities to all. Till the end of the fourth plan the planners felt that economic growth and employment generation can tackle the problem of poverty in India.

As there was no decline in the incidence till the end of sixties, it was realized that programmes for direct attack on poverty were needed, 'Garibi Hatao' became the main political slogan in the fifth five year plan period during which various antipoverty programmes have been introduced. During the half century after independence a lot of research has been undertaken on various factors of poverty. Literacy (Education) is one of the factors which show its influence on the rural poverty.

Then the independent India felt the great need of expansion of education. Therefore the national Government tool active and sincere steps to make the secondary education free universal and compulsory. The principles of compulsory education were declared through article 45 of the constitution of India for not only develop the literacy levels in rural areas but also to improve the living

conditions (poverty) of the people.

Rural Poverty and Education

The relationship between education and poverty in rural areas is far more complex than what is conveyed in a simple table linking consumption rankings to the education of the household head. Indeed, education is not only an important determinant of economic wellbeing but is a key dimension of wellbeing itself. A very important set of questions thus pertains to the factors which determine education outcomes, and in the context of this note, the particular role that poverty might be playing in constraining access to education.

An important gender gap in enrollments and in school attainment in Andhra Pradesh has counted by some studies, and illustrate that this gap is also greater among the less wealthy. The evidence shows that poor girls were still markedly less likely to be enrolled in school and had achieved sharply lower education levels than rich girls, and the gap between boys and girls was particularly high among the poorer households in the population.

Secondary Schools Vs Rural Poverty

The secondary school has been introduced in the village not only to bring in minimum literacy to the rural population, but also as the central institution for the development of villages. Its secondary objective is to teach the basic skills of communication. The high proportion of dropouts and increasing number of illiterates indicate that even the basic aims of formal schooling are not being achieved. Consequently, there is a growing concern among educators and planners that existing secondary education does not provide a particularly helpful

or relevant experience for those who do not progress to higher levels.

Coincident with this trend is the realization that the type of education offered in the rural areas has very little relevance to their situations, problems and needs. Insofar as rural development is concerned, it has been claimed that much of formal education is counter-productive since it has alienated the youth from their environment. This has led some critics to propose ruralisation of the secondary school curricula.

Statement of the problem

Therefore, the central purpose of this study is to analyse how the system of secondary education in India actually works at the village level and how it interacts with other elements like poverty in rural development at coastal districts of Andhra Pradesh state. The title is **"Rural Secondary School Education and Poverty Levels in East and West Godavari districts of Andhra Pradesh – A Study".**

Objectives

1. To study the attitudes of school teachers and parents of school going children towards the school environmental conditions in connection with the improvement of secondary education in rural areas.
2. To study the perceptions and attitudes of teacher respondents towards secondary school education in rural areas.
3. To study the perceptions of parents of school going children towards secondary school education in rural areas.
4. To study the environmental conditions of the secondary schools in

rural areas of East and West Godavari districts of Andhra Pradesh.

5. To study the significant difference in the opinions of teachers and parents of school going children towards the factors of secondary school education in rural areas.
6. To suggest measures for the effective implementation of the state policies that proper functioning of secondary schools in rural areas.

Hypothesis

1. There is no significant difference among teachers on the functioning performance of secondary schools in rural areas.
2. There is no significant difference among parents of schools going children towards the factors influencing the rural secondary school education.
3. There is no significant relation between rural poverty and rural secondary school education in the study area.

Sample of the Study

The size of the sample is 200 teachers, 200 parents, and 36 secondary schools. These samples were collected from two coastal districts of Andhra Pradesh state i.e. East Godavari and West Godavari. Therefore, in the light of the above statement and on the basis of the teachers, parents of the school going children and Secondary Schools form sample two districts, the stratified sample method has been adopter in selection of teachers, parents and schools and the required sample was drawn, proportionately from each sub-group of the sample by random selection.

Analysis of Data

The primary data entered in to computer by using SPSS software package and Uni-variate, bi-variate tables were generated. The F-tests and t-tests were carried out for testing the hypothesis.

Findings of the study

1. **The school and the Child**: In the process of growing up the child is helped by the various stake holders, parents, kin, neighbors and the community as a whole. The school teacher, being an outsider, is not a participant in this process of incidental but fairly well-organized cultural learning. For the rural child, therefore, the teacher in the formal school is a stranger and the school is a place where it has no protection from parents, older siblings, or relations and neighbors. School entry for the child is traumatic, an entry into insecurity, into a world of which the ways are quite different from what the child has experienced in its cultural milieu. This is often the reason for non-enrolment of rural children and of a large dropout rate.
2. **Village and the School**: Most of the children and their parents are living distance from the schools, since it is only the teacher who is designated by the system to transmit education according to a state-prescribed curriculum. Through him only the education/ literacy transmitted from the text books to pupil. The textbook is the only tool of education, but the standardized, formal language it uses is far removed from the local vernacular. Its lessons deal with subjects with which the child has no

cultural familiarity. The so-called co-curricular activities are also prescribed from a ‘national’ and ‘international’ standpoint about which the community, parents and children know next to nothing.

3. **Mid-day-meal and Children**: Majority of the rural families are still in the below poverty levels. So the Government also introduced this Mid-day-meal Progamme to attract not only the children to attend school but also poor parents to send their children to schools instead of sending them to domestic work (labor). This will encourage secondary education and curtail dropouts in the schools.
4. **Children and Parents**: The parents do not know what the lessons/curriculum intends to do or what the textbook teaches their children in the schools. As a result, this education can receive hardly any support at home. The results of school learning fail to correspond with the parents’ expectations of schooling and they withdraw their children from school at secondary level. The children, by and large, do not regret this withdrawal and happily return to the security of the culture imbibed by them before school entry. This picture has seen in the three districts under investigation. It reinforced the overall research findings in this respect.
5. **Rural Secondary School Education and Children**: Children in the rural areas get habituated to go with their parents (father / mother/ other family members) to farm lands or work places. At there they will help their parents in their works and play for some times. This will make children in curtailing the habit of school going at their early age. On the other side the

parents will not encourage their children to attend school because they are habituated the help from their children in the farms. In the school, the teachers are also not encouraging the children by supplying text-books/note books.

6. **Classroom Environment:** The community is often asked by educational bureaucrats to construct school-rooms or give equipment to the school. But the immediate users of secondary education, i.e., the parents and the community, are never asked whether the curriculum, pedagogy, or economic aims of schooling correspond with their expectations and whether they could help make education culturally relevant. The gap between the economic concepts acquired by the children in the community and those adopted by the state in a bureaucratized school system being seriously at variance, the cultural confusion of the learning process gets exacerbated.

Conclusion and suggestions

India is rich in human resources. This has been amply demonstrated by what Indians have achieved in all fields of human endeavour, including science and technology what's needed now is a long term policy for development of human resources through education training, health care, and empowerment and creation of a congenial socio-economic institutional (including legal), and political environment for the fullest possible utilization of the vast, untapped reservoirs of human power and ingenuity. Human resources are inexhaustible and renewable, and hence the only resources which can sustain development forever, our axiom

in the twenty-first century should be human beings are both the end and the means of development.

Strengthening the impulses of modernization for the achievement of economic and technological self-reliance is needed for reduction in the incidence of poverty and unemployment. There is a need of improvement in the quality of life of the people in several with special reference to the economically and socially handicapped population through a minimum needs programme. Hence, promoting policies to control the growth of population through voluntary acceptance of the small family volume should be implemented. Therefore, there is a need of active involvement of all sections of the people in the process of development through appropriate education, communication and institutional strategies.

The configuration of education, particularly foundational education needs to consist of elements which are local and culture-friendly. At the same time, widening of the learners' horizons should be possible through multimedia programmes, leaving their use not to state prescription but to the learners with their various goals and interests. Such widening of horizons is essential not only for literally developed states like Kerala but for the Andhra Pradesh as well. There could be programmes having diversified curricular offerings, taking the learner from the local level to the regional, national and even international levels of knowledge acquisition through a process of life-long learning. Therefore, the educational diversity is essential for overcoming the control of the state and for handing back to the people the future of their children's culture and destinies.